ffers International Money Order Service with various countries for several years now and has arrangements to receive money orders from 27 countries for payment in India. Outward ıoney orders service is available for Nepal and Bhutan only.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

BSNL expansion plan

1029. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND NFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is inordinate delay in carrying out BSNL expansion plans;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) in its report has pointed ıut that BSNL failed to select the suppliers for a major expansion of cellular mobile telephone ervice;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by BSNL to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND NFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir. BSNL has ıeen continuously expanding its telecom network. However, there is some delay in expansion ıf GSM mobile service and Trunk Automatic Exchange (TAX). The reasons are detailed ıelow:

(i) Procurement of GSM Mobile Equipment—The procurement process for major expansion plan has been delayed by about 6 months due to filling of court case by one of the bidders against its disqualification.

(ii) Procurement of TAX Equipment—Earlier BSNL was deploying Time Division Multiplexing (TDM) TAX Equipment. With the fast changes in technology, Next Generation Network (NGN) has been planned for induction in place of TDM TAX during 2007-08. Since NGN is a new technology, vendors/manufacturers supplying this equipment have yet to obtain technology approval in India. Therefore, there is some delay in expansion of TAX network.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. CAG has observed that there were delays at every stage of finalization ıf the tender of procurement of GSM Mobile Equipment. They have further observed that lue to delays there has been loss of opportunity of adding subscribers to the network.

(e) The procurement process of GSM Mobile Equipment has since been concluded with ıcceptance of Advance Purchase Order (APO) by the L-1 bidder and the capacities are ;xpected to be progressively available form last quarter of this financial year.

Post Offices in Andhra Pradesh

1030. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nearly 30,000 villages in the State of Andhra Pradesh do not have Post Offices;

(b) if so, the details of villages, district-wise, that do not have Post Offices;

(c) the efforts his Ministry is making to cover the above villages with postal facilities;

(d) whether any help from the private sector is sought in setting up of Post Offices in the above villages;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(g) whether Government proposes to allow a part of MPLADS's fund for spending on setting up of Post Offices in villages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir. 11914 villages in Andhra Pradesh do not have Post Offices. District-wise details of villages that do not have Post Offices in the State of Andhra Pradesh are given in the Statement. (*See* below).

(c) Post Offices are opened in villages subject to fulfilment of distance, population and income norms and availability of resources. The Department provides facilities of daily delivery of mail to every customer, collects letters from Letter Boxes and sells stamps and stationery at the door step of every customer in villages. Villages that do not justify opening of a separate Post Office are provided basic postal facilities through the nearest existing Post Office and Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendra.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise in view of (d) above.

(f) The post offices are opened as per administrative instructions for increasing access to postal net work keeping in view the prescribed norms.

(g) No, Sir. There is no such proposal to allow part of MPLADS's fund for spending on setting up of Post Offices in villages.

Statement

District-wise number of villages without Post Office in Andhra Pradesh as on 31.3.2007

Sl. No.	Name of District	No. of villages (Inhabited) without Post Office
1.	Anantpur	79
2.	Adilabad	1100
3.	Chittoor	641
4.	Cuddapah	80
5.	East Godavari	431
6.	Guntur	240
7.	Hyderabad	nil
8.	Karimnagar	320
9.	Khammam	486

1	2	3
10.	Krishna	102
11.	Kurnool	197
12.	Mahabubnagar	676
13.	Medak	667
14.	Nalgonda	366
15.	Nellore	263
16.	Nizamabad	403
17.	Prakasam	148
18.	Rangareddy	837
19.	Srikakulam	1253
20.	Vizianagaram	717
21.	Visakhpatnam	2476
22.	West Godavari	174
23.	Warangal	258
	TOTAL:	11914

STD telephone facility for soldiers

†1031. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the facility of STD telephone is available for the benefit of soldiers posted on the borders of the country to talk to their families who safeguard the borders of the country in difficult conditions;

(b) whether they have to spend seventy five rupees for making the STD call;

(c) whether Department of Telecom is aware of these facts; and

(d) if so, whether Department of Telecom is considering to provide them inexpensive STD facility?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. Normal rates are charged for STD calls made by the soldiers. Further, for the benefit of personnel of armed forces as well as paramilitary forces. 1/4th of normal rates are charged from the PCOs operated by them in Kargil, Leh and Nobra Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs).

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (b) above.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.